



**Chief Executive Officer**  
Cynthia H. de Lorenzi

**President**  
Bruce T. Long

December 11, 2004

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 04-405

As the CEO of a woman-owned, independent ISP in Fairfax, VA I am very proud of our personal and business' contribution to this region and our nation. My brother, Bob de Lorenzi founded PatriotNet in 1994 with two other colleagues following graduation at George Mason University. He built a small computer consulting business into a prestigious ISP serving our community with quality service, affordable business solutions and Class A support.

My brother, Bob de Lorenzi passed away unexpectedly 2 years ago, but prior to his death at age 41 he accomplished much. He was awarded Fairfax Counties businessman of the year, which was presented to him by Congressman Tom Davis. He served on the board of directors for the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Directors for the Northern Virginia Technology Council, as well as founding Director of the Fairfax Millennium Rotary Club and was selected as the Chief Technical Consultant for the Bush/Cheney transition team during the President's first election.

I share this information with you to permit you to glimpse into the life of one single ISP owner. Since my brother's death, my husband and I left our home in Dallas, Texas to run PatriotNet on behalf of my mother, who inherited the business from my brother. Our family has personally invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into building PatriotNet and we fear that the granting of the BellSouth Forbearance Petition WC Docket No. 4-405 will effectively put us out of business, with no recourse for recapturing the money we have invested. Our mother mortgaged her home to support this growing company and, if granted will be left only with a bankrupt company with contracts we will not be able to honor and debts that we will not be able to repay.

BellSouth's Petition for Forbearance attempts to undermine three decades of pro-competition policy and literally put the Internet Service Provider industry out of business once and for all. While removal of common carriage and *Computer II* obligations would, indeed, slightly reduce a monopoly's cost of doing business, it would be no more appropriate than permitting the ILECs to ban "foreign attachments" to their telephone lines, as they argued against in the *Carterfone* decision which presaged *Computer II*. The Petition must be dismissed.

Imagine any other industry in this country, such as the Washington Post being told that they had 6 months to port all of their customers to the largest and most powerful business competitor, such as United Press International or face hefty price increases. This smacks of government endorsed blackmail. Worse yet, our company PatriotNet, as well as other independent ISP's will be forced to lay off thousands of employees, creating a chain reaction putting those businesses supported by our presence out of business as well.

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Ultimately, a vote in favor of the Bells will do harm to a recovering economy and threaten the very foundation of what makes this country great, small business! Please do not permit this petition to be the death of the independent ISP industry that will ultimately hurts thousands of business owners and their families.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia H. de Lorenzi  
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